

THE **ARRL** Letter

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FCC Affirms Public Service Communications

For several years, the Tri-State Amateur Repeater Council (TSARC) has provided communications for the New York City Marathon sponsored by the New York Road Runners Club. From time to time controversy has surrounded this effort and similar ones by other groups around the country because of the prohibition of business communications. The controversy was further fueled this year when the Road Runners decided to award prize money to the winners. TSARC President Steve Mendelsohn, WA2DHF, wrote FCC Private Radio Bureau Chief Robert Foosaner and asked what is permissible. Foosaner responded in an October 23 letter that may be of service to other groups considering participating in public events. Here is the text of the letter:

"This is in response to your letter of October 15, 1984 concerning providing amateur radio communications at the New York Road Runners Club marathon.

"The Commission addressed the matter of business communications in the Amateur Radio Service in the Order released July 12, 1983 (copy enclosed). You will note in paragraph 3 that the term business communications as defined in Section 97.3(bb) of the Rules is used in the broadest context. It includes all types of communications which are intended to facilitate the regular business affairs of any party, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, etc. Thus, the determination as to the types of amateur radio communications that your group could provide at a marathon would not be affected by the profit objectives of the sponsor, nor by the pay status of other participants.

"A fundamental guideline that should be observed in these instances is also stated in paragraph 3 of the Order: '...the Amateur Radio Service should not be used as an alternative to the land

mobile, broadcast, maritime, or common carrier radio services, all of which have been established by appropriate regulatory processes.' To the extent that these other radio services can be used to perform the necessary communications, such communications should not be transmitted by amateur radio.

"Section 97.110 of the Rules, which prohibits business communications by amateur radio, does not prohibit amateur radio operators from participating in a marathon as a public service activity. Although some communications transmitted could incidentally benefit a sponsor, we do not view such communications as violations of the rules where their main purpose is to provide a service to the public.

"In your letter you describe three specific services which amateur radio could provide. The first is a medical network, by which race authorities could be notified of a runner's need for medical attention. This medical network is of course acceptable.

"The second service is logistical. Amateur radio operators would provide the communications necessary to facilitate the public's safe observation of the event. Clearly there is benefit to the race sponsor, but it is incidental; the principal beneficiaries of this would be the runners and the public.

"Finally, there is the lead runner position network. As you acknowledge the purpose of this is to facilitate a system whereby the public, including, presumably, the news media, are informed of the progress of the race via amateur radio. This runs afoul of the Section 97.113 of the rules, which prohibits the dissemination of radio communications intended to be received by the public. If you wish to

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provide this service we recommend you do it on commercial frequencies with other equipment. Amateur radio operators could participate in this phase, but not by virtue of their amateur licenses.

"Please inform your group that their licenses are not endangered by participating in the marathon. They have my support and my personal thanks for serving the public."

¶ ARRL has filed comments partially supporting FCC's proposal to amend the rules concerning the rebroadcast of transmissions from non-broadcast stations (BC Docket No. 79-47). The League supports the proposal to delete the requirement that broadcast stations obtain FCC authority to rebroadcast transmissions of private non-broadcast radio stations. ARRL does believe, however, that the broadcasters should continue to receive the permission of the amateur station prior to the retransmission. Without such a provision an amateur would not have control over the possible uses of his signal.

The proposal would also prohibit hams from doing anything that might in any way facilitate the normal business activity of a commercial newsgathering operation. ARRL argues that the language used is overly restrictive, since anything that an amateur might do in an emergency in some way might facilitate such newsgathering activity. A better approach, says the League, is prohibiting amateurs from acting in the capacity of a reporter or translator.

FCC proposed to remove the phrase "automatic means" from Section 97.113, which deals with amateurs retransmitting signals from other services. With this phrase removed, retransmission under any circumstance would be illegal. Many groups now manually retransmit the signals from the space shuttle and from NOAA weather broadcasts during weather emergencies. ARRL opposes this move because it places additional unnecessary restrictions on the amateur service.

Another point of contention is the FCC proposal to prohibit one-way emergency communications including bona fide emergency drill practice transmissions. FCC's stated reason for this is a fear that amateur stations may conclude that

they are free to broadcast during emergencies. ARRL is not aware that such a misconstruction has ever occurred.

¶ On October 23, FCC granted an ARRL request for extension of time for participation in PR Docket 84-874. The new deadlines are January 24, 1985 for comments and March 11, 1985 for reply comments. Formal participation in the matter requires submission of an original and five copies, but members of the general public who wish to comment informally may submit one copy. Mention the docket number at the top of the filing and mail it to the Secretary, FCC, Washington, D.C. 20554 so as to arrive by the deadlines.

¶ The deadline for returning ballots in the elections for ARRL Director and Vice-Director (Vol. 3, No. 18) is 12 noon, November 20. Ballots received after that time will not be counted. All full members (members holding valid amateur licenses) in divisions having elections should have received their ballots by no later than November 1. Anyone who is due a ballot and has not received it should contact ARRL Hq. immediately.

¶ "Amateur Radio's Newest Frontier" will be available to your local PBS station via a satellite feed from KUED in Salt Lake City. The videotape will be transmitted at 1530 hours Mountain Standard Time (1730 EST) on December 30 over the Pacific Mountain Network (Schedule C) using West Star IV, Transponder C.

Broadcasters tell us that there is little likelihood of a PBS station "picking up" this program unless they know there is local interest in it. If you would like to see this tape documentary of W5LFL's STS-9 operation on your local PBS affiliate, please call or write them and ask that they "pick up the feed." The more calls and letters a station receives, the greater the chance of them airing the show. If you own a TVRO, this would be a good chance for you to add a copy of "Amateur Radio's Newest Frontier" to your personal library.

¶ Another article on the Project Goodwill program, which was included in the June issue of the IARU Calendar, has evoked some response in our sister societies. Five Project Goodwill transceiver kits have been sent to Swaziland, and two are being shipped to Malaysia.

¶ Astronaut Tony England, WØRE, tells us that a second ham is now scheduled to fly with him on his mission next spring. John-David F. Bartoe, W4NYZ, is a Payload Specialist for the mission. Ground work for the project is proceeding on the assumption that formal notification of acceptance from NASA will be coming forth-with.

¶ A year ago in July FCC adopted a Report and Order in PR Docket 82624, changing the way amateur power is measured from dc input to PEP output. The decision was well accepted by most of the amateur fraternity and indeed, the new standard was a bit more generous for most modes. However, the new standard of 1500 watts PEP output represented a cut for radio amateurs using full carrier standard high-level amplitude modulation. [FCC attempted to soften the blow by "grandfathering" present operations of A.M. transmitters until 1990.] Nevertheless, petitions for reconsideration were filed by the Society for Promotion of Amplitude Modulation, Kevin Alfred Strom and Donald B. Chester. Reply comments in support of these were filed by Arthur E. Provan and Byron H. Kretzman. ARRL filed a Motion for Clarification, asking the Commission to clarify a statement in the original order: "Should we decide upon other standards in the future, we will release them in public notices." On September 10, 1984, FCC released a Memorandum Opinion and Order denying the petitions for reconsideration, clarifying that the language questioned by the League dealt only with measurement techniques, and correcting Section 97.67 (b) of the rules to make it clear that the new peak power output standard is subject to limitations and exceptions in Sections 97.61 and 97.67.

We now have a news release from Glenn A. Baxter, K1MAN, of Belgrade Lakes, Maine, who says he has taken the matter of "the A.M. power reduction" to the United States Court of Appeals in Washington, in an action dated September 21, 1984. The release says that a Federal District Court ruling January 19, 1984, cited Title 47 U.S. Code Section 402 which authorized the appeal upon a final FCC ruling on the petitions for reconsideration. Baxter goes on to say:

"... It is the principle of the thing that is important. This principle is easily understood by any amateur who is

told by his local zoning board to cut his 60 foot tower in half by the year 1990 and that this will reduce his signal by only 3 dB; their primary reason being that they cannot justify the expense of measuring 60 foot towers as opposed to 30 foot towers. . ."

What Baxter has actually done at this stage is to file "Notice of Appeal," a preliminary step in this process, on his own behalf.

¶ The Emergency Coordinator's Handbook is now available. Advance copies have been dispatched to all Officers, Directors, and Vice Directors. The mass mailing of the Handbook to all SMs, SECs, DECs, and ECs, is in progress. For ECs just coming on board, the EC Handbook will be automatically included in the package of initial supplies sent to new ECs from Hq. The Handbook, edited by staffer Mike Riley, KX1B, is undoubtedly the most comprehensive work on Amateur Radio emergency communications ever published. A super job by Mike and all the amateurs throughout the country who contributed! Please note that because of the substantial size of this document (approx. 250 pages), non League Officials who might request the Handbook will be asked to remit \$5.00 to defray printing and postage costs.

¶ In August QST, Washington Mailbox dealt with the issue of which call sign to use. The statement, "Of course the control operator may simply use his or her own call sign at your shack to ID the operations," was challenged by several amateurs, who see it as in conflict with Section 97.84. ARRL Washington Area Coordinator Perry Williams, W1UED, met with FCC Personal Radio Bureau Chief John B. Johnston, W3BE, on a recent visit. The copy had been read by Mr. Johnston before publication so it seemed wise and natural to ask his views again. Now that transceivers can be passed from hand to hand, the interpretation he has been using for some time is based on physical control being the important criterion. Thus, John believes that the call sign of the person having physical control of the station equipment may always be used. The original rule was written in another era for different equipment conditions. Yet there
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are cases, such as WIAW, other club stations and central stations for emergency service, in which the identity of the station should be preserved --as indeed it is in the language of Section 97.84. Summing up, the present interpretation as reported in August QST poses no unreasonable limits and provides maximum flexibility to the Amateur Service.

¶ The 1984 Simulated Emergency Test was highlighted by the first SET formal messages being sent to ARRL Hq. via satellite. K8OCL in Dearborn, Michigan and N4AZI in Baton Rouge, Louisiana originated the messages and transmitted them through Oscar 10 to W1NU in Connecticut. W1NU then called ARRL Hq. by landline.

The text of these historic messages was:

"AMSAT Satellite Emergency Communications System activated for 1984 SET on Oscar 10 SSC H1 X ASECS will be available for all future drills and emergency situations."

A new era in emergency communications has begun with the 1984 SET.

¶ AMSAT-OSCAR 10 has a new operating schedule, effective immediately. The following mode schedule is an adjustment to allow more operating time.

Mean Anomaly	Mode	Time
0-99	B	Mon Thru Sat
100-117	L	Mon Thru Sat
118-218	B	Daily
219-234	Off	Daily
235-256	B	Daily

Mean Anomaly 0-256 is one complete orbit starting at perigee. Perigee is the lowest altitude of the orbit in the southern hemisphere. Apogee is the highest altitude of the orbit in the northern hemisphere. Apogee would be mean anomaly 128 or 1/2 an orbit. One complete orbit is 699.5 minutes.

¶ A routine CCD (charge coupled device--a solid-state camera) image taken by OSCAR 9 on October 3 contained a close-up view of Northern Italy with both coastlines quite clearly defined - the best image yet!

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¶ What's the current amateur population of Canada? According to DOC, here's the breakdown as of 1984 August 24: British Columbia - 3916, Alberta - 1928, Saskatchewan - 791, Manitoba - 791, Ontario - 8633, Quebec - 4016, New Brunswick - 722, Nova Scotia - 1118, Prince Edward Island - 206, Newfoundland and Labrador - 456, Yukon Territory - 51, and Northwest Territories - 69, for a total of 22,697 amateurs in all. The Amateur Service is growing, but only by 3-4% a year. Total amateur population for March 31, 1983 was 21,822, for 1982 March 31 was 21,225.

¶ The ARRL Board of Directors is meeting this week in Hartford to discuss and decide League policy on several vital Amateur Radio issues. This, the Board's second annual meeting, progresses as this issue is released to the printer. Watch for a special WIAW bulletin for Board meeting highlights, and The ARRL Letter (next issue) for an in-depth report.

¶ The resolicitation for Section Manager petitions for the Eastern Pennsylvania Section appearing on page 52 of October 1984 QST is in error. Please disregard this resolicitation, as the Eastern Pennsylvania election has already been completed in accordance with standard Section Manager election procedures. The outcome of the Eastern Pennsylvania election appears under the Section Manager election results heading on page 52 of the October issue.

¶ This list (released October 11, 1984) shows the last call sign in each group to be assigned for each district, as of the first of October 1984.

Radio District	Group A Am. Extra	Group B Advanced	Group C Tech/Gen	Group D Novice
0	N101	K00SV	N0FTN	KA0TNC
1	KX1B	KB1PK	N1DGG	KA1MDQ
2	NG2T	KD2JJ	N2FEE	KA2VZK
3	KU3E	KC3PG	N3EBV	KA3NFH
4	AA4FG	KI4TN	N4KVR	KB4LPD
5	N5SL	KE5SD	N5HIT	KA5USF
6	WC6Q	KG6LN	N6LDA	KB6GMJ
7	NJ7R	KE7AS	N7GPP	KA7TVV
8	NJ8U	KD8UB	N8GBB	KABVXH
9	NB9V	KD9LA	N9EUB	KA9SMT
N. Mariana Is.	AH00	AH0AC	KH0AG	WH0AAG
Guam	AH2T	AH2BA	KH2BR	WH2AEF
Johnston Is.	AH3A	AH3AC	KH3AB	WH3AAC
Midway Is.		AH4AA	KH4AD	WH4AAF
Hawaii	WH6U	AH6FQ	NH6CI	WH6BAW
Kure Is.			KH7AA	
Amer. Samoa	AH8B	AH8AB	KH8AD	WH8AAO
Wake Wilkes Peale		AH9AB	KH9AB	WH9AAB
Alaska		AL7GD	NL7EL	WL7BEP
Virgin Is.	KP2L	KP2AT	NP2BE	WP2AEA
Puerto Rico	WP4D	KP4HZ	NP4LG	WP4DSI

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